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INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY 0294
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 2230
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 8914
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 7355
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA PRIORITY 9733
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 1027
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 7949
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 001074

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/18/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PARM](#) [ENRG](#) [JA](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIAN FM LAVROV SAYS AIM AND INTENT OF JAPAN
MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM ARE "OBVIOUS" AND "UNDERSTANDABLE."

REF: A. TOKYO 1002
[1](#)B. TOKYO 0366
[1](#)C. 07 TOKYO 2690

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer. Reasons 1.4 (B) (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. The aim and intent of Japan's ballistic missile defense system are "obvious" and "understandable," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura on April 14. The Russian FM "indirectly admitted" that a Russian strategic bomber intruded into Japanese airspace on February 9. A senior Russian Air Force officer, however, undermined Foreign Minister's remark during a separate meeting with Japanese defense officials. The two Foreign Ministers failed to reach agreement on the Northern Territories issue, but finalized plans for their leaders to hold a bilateral meeting on the margins of the July 7-9 G8 meeting at Hokkaido's Lake Toya. On Sakhalin II, Tokyo officials assess that Russia's plans to build the pipeline eastward to a new port near Vladivostok suggest Moscow will maintain the idea of transporting Siberian oil and gas through Russia to the Pacific rather than via China. End Summary.

Lavrov and Khristenko

[1](#)2. (C) On April 15, Russia Division Principal Deputy Director Kotaro Otsuki briefed Embassy Tokyo on Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Koumura's April 12-14 visit to Russia. Koumura visited Japanese automakers and paid a call on Governor Valentina Matvienko in St. Petersburg, before conducting meetings with FM Lavrov and Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko in Moscow (Ref A). Koumura's discussion with Lavrov, which Otsuki said was divided into a two-hour session on bilateral issues and a one-hour lunch on

international matters, covered ballistic missile defense (BMD), the February 9 intrusion by a Russian strategic bomber into Japanese airspace (Ref B), the Northern Territories issue, and preparations for the July 7-9 G8 Summit at Hokkaido's Lake Toya. The two men also touched on North Korea, Central Asia, and cooperation on dismantling Russian nuclear submarines (Ref C). The Khristenko meeting reviewed progress on the Initiative for Strengthening Japan-Russia Cooperation in the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia (Ref C) and the Sakhalin II pipeline project.

Missile Defense - No Concerns?

13. (C) Lavrov said the April 11 Political-Military Dialogue between Deputy Foreign Minister Kenichiro Sasae and Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak (septel), which included talks on missile defense, had been "productive and constructive." Koumura explained that Tokyo's BMD system was not intended to harm Russian interests. According to Otsuki, Lavrov responded that "the aim and intent of Japan's ballistic missile defense system are obvious for Russia." The Russian FM added that it is "understandable why Japan would introduce such measures," and there would be "no particular requirement or complaint" from Moscow. Asked to clarify Lavrov's remarks, Otsuki observed that "it seemed that Russia was not that concerned" about Japan's missile defense project.

Air Intrusion

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14. (C) The Russian FM "indirectly admitted" that a Russian Tupolev Tu-95 "Bear" strategic bomber had intruded into Japanese airspace on February 9, Otsuki stated. Lavrov said that the incident had "not been an intentional thing," but the FM "did not express directly the idea that an incursion" had taken place. Otsuki added that General of the Army, Chief of the General Staff Yuri Baluyevsky denied that any aircraft intrusion had taken place during an April 11 meeting with Chief of the Joint Staff of Japan's Self-Defense Forces Admiral Takashi Saito in Moscow.

15. (C) Otsuki said Tokyo officials would find it difficult to press the issue further, because pressing the case would cause the Russian Defense Ministry to "lose face." The two sides agreed to hold consultations on aircraft activities on April 21 in Tokyo, with the Japanese delegation to be headed by the Foreign Ministry's European Affairs Bureau Deputy Director-General Keiichi Katakami.

Northern Territories

16. (C) The Foreign Ministers "talked a lot" about the Northern Territories issue but failed to reach an agreement, Otsuki stated. Lavrov reportedly said to his counterpart "Russia is ready to look for a solution which both sides will find acceptable." Tokyo now assesses that Russian leaders intend to keep working to resolve the problem.

Hokkaido Summit

17. (C) Japan and Russia agreed to hold a bilateral summit meeting on the margins of the July 7-9 G8 meeting at Hokkaido's Lake Toya. Japan DFM Sasae will hold G8 preparatory discussions in June with newly-appointed Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Borodavkin. Lavrov said Moscow is ready to support Tokyo's chairmanship at Lake Toya

and will be looking for ways to cooperate with Japan.

North Korea/Central Asia/Nuclear Subs

18. (C) Lavrov expressed optimism about efforts to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. He pointed to positive signs in the negotiations, but admitted that many problems remain. On Central Asia, the two ministers reviewed the proposals outlined in former FM Taro Aso's November 2006 broad-based policy initiative - The Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic Horizons. Turning to environmental issues, Koumura noted that cooperative efforts to dismantle Russian nuclear submarines (Ref C) should be finished by 2010, and reviewed recent consultations on climate change.

Sakhalin II

19. (C) Koumura and Energy Minister Khristenko explored follow-up mechanisms for cooperation under the Initiative for Strengthening Japan-Russia Cooperation in the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia. The two men reviewed the status of the pipeline project, which will continue east toward what

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Otsuki said would be a new port at Koz'mino, near Vladivostok. Tokyo assesses that Russia's plans to build the pipeline eastward suggests Moscow will maintain the idea of transporting Siberian oil and gas through Russia to the Pacific rather than by way of China.
SCHIEFFER